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TOLSTOJ. Vision of the World War.



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THE  
VISION  
OF THE  
WORLD-WAR

SEEN REPEATEDLY BY  
LEO TOLSTOY  
FROM

1908 TO 1910

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Edited by ALBERT J. EDMUNDS, M. A.,  
Author of *Buddhist and Christian Gospels*.

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Also, *La Pucelle*: a poem on French Visions of 1913. With notes on doubtful ones.  
Appendix: The Vision of Joseph Hoag in 1803.

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PHILADELPHIA:  
INNES & SONS, 129-135 NORTH TWELFTH STREET,  
1914.  
E.V.

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Tolstoi, L.N

## THE APOCALYPSE OF LEO TOLSTOY

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UTTERED BY HIM IN 1910, THE YEAR OF HIS DEATH

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This vision first appeared in *The Semi-Monthly Magazine* attacht to the Sunday *North American* of Philadelphia, February 23, 1913. The following letter in French was printed with it in fac-simile. When I first saw the vision reprinted without attestation in 1914, I naturally thought that it was spurious, and said so while giving a summary of it in my *History Simplified*. It is here reprinted in full from the original text of *The Semi-Monthly Magazine* of the Sunday *North American*. This is exhausted, and cannot be bought, even at *The North American* office. The copy used has been lent me by my friend Herman Haupt, the bookseller. It is much to be regretted that so important a document should be treated as a journalistic waif. The French letter from Countess Nastasia Tolstoy is reprinted with the permission of the editor of the Sunday *North American*.

Several corruptions of the text are already current, especially the introduction of the word *Persians*, as noted below. This misprint will be eagerly seized upon by partisans of the Bahai movement. But it has no warrant from the original text.

PSKOFF, GRUSINSKOE, RUSSIA.

4 janvier, 1913.

Au rédacteur

*The Semi-Monthly Magazine :*

MONSIEUR :

J'ai l'honneur de vous adresser mon interview avec le défunt Comte Léon Tolstoi, ayant eu lieu quelques mois avant de sa mort. Je vous autorise s' en faire usage pour la première fois, la copie originale ayant été présenté à Sa Majesté le Czar. En espérant que le public de lecteurs américains soit intéressé d' apprendre les prophéties du génie le plus grand de notre âge,

Je suis avec hon[neur]

et respect, Monsieur,

Votre

N. TOLSTOI.

## PROPHECY AND LAST MESSAGE FROM TOLSTOY.<sup>(1)</sup>

.....

### TOLSTOY TO THE CZAR, THE KAISER AND THE KING OF ENGLAND.

.....

BY COUNTESS NASTASIA TOLSTOY.

In the autumn of 1910 the Czarina invited me to visit her at the summer palace at Peterhoff, to have an informal talk with her family. This was a very unusual favor, and, feeling much flattered, I arrived at the appointed hour at the railway station that served the picturesque royal summer resort. A special coach took me directly to the palace, where the Chamberlain's secretary told me that the Imperial family was on the veranda, drinking tea. It was there that the Czarina wisht to receive me.

Her Majesty was still suffering from her long nervous breakdown, and she lookt pale and weak. We talkt for a short while about her health, and exchanged items of court gossip. She then remarkt confidentially that the Czar had exprest a wish to see me, and, of course, such an expression was a command. His Majesty was playing chess with his daughters and the governess, when the Czarina invited him to tell me what he wanted.

"Countess," began the Czar, in a simple and direct way, "I have a very peculiar, confidential mission for you. But I call upon you reluctantly."

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(1) In red on title-page.



He became suddenly silent and lookt at me as if doubting my readiness to serve him. I bowed politely, murmuring :

"Your Majesty, I shall be only too happy to hear about it."

"Well," he drawled, "the German Kaiser and the King of England have put me in an unpleasant position with their requests. They are curious to get a direct message from our old Count Leo Nicolaevitch Tolstoy—a very strange notion—and naturally I could not decline to humor them. I did not know how to go about the delicate matter; as, frankly, I do not care for much of the old man's writings and preachings, as you know. But then, the Czarina told me that she knows you very well, and that you know him personally. I suppose he is related to you? Very well, then, I should be greatly obliged if you could take the old man an oral message from me that if he would in a friendly way send a message thru you to me, I would send it on to the King of England and the Kaiser of Germany. It has to be something that he has not published before, and that he will never publish himself."

"Your Majesty, I am gratified at this mark of your exceptional favor," I replied. "I shall pay the Count a visit without delay."

"And as soon as you have returned with his message, drop a line to the Minister of the Court and I shall arrange to see you immediately," said the Czar, extending his hand to me.

We talkt for half an hour longer on various topics of the day, and then I left.

A week later, I was a guest at the country estate of my grand-uncle, and explained to him briefly the object of my call. He listened to me curiously and replied: "Very strange. I should be glad to send a message to royalty; but the trouble with me is that I have written all my life messages for the mob. I am not accustomed to the con-



ventions of Court diction. However, I will think the matter over."

"Leo Nicolaevitch, don't you have any visions of a political nature, or any prophecies on a large international scale?" I askt.

"A good idea!" he exclaimed. "I have had some really strange experiences which I could not publish as fiction. There is something that has haunted me for the past two years. I don't know how to explain the nature of it to you. I cannot call it a dream, because I have seen it often while I have been sitting at my writing-table. On other occasions it has appeared to me at twilight, before my dinner hour. I am not a believer in ghosts, nor in the spiritualistic explanation of phenomena; but I admit that I cannot account for this mysterious affair."

"Is it a vision?" I interrupted.

"Something of that order, but very clear. So clear that I could draw a distinct picture of all that transpires. Furthermore, I can call up the vision at will. I am almost sure I could do it while you are here. The only difficulty is, that I am not able to write anything during the time of the manifestation. My hands are absolutely paralyzed."

"I shall be happy to write down what you dictate," I urged.

"Very good! That settles the matter," he replied. "I shall try for something immediately. There on the table are paper and pencil. Or use a pen—whatever you want."

In a few minutes I was waiting for the great moment, pencil and paper in hand. My aged host leaned back in his chair, covered his eyes with his hand and relapsed into an apparently comatose condition. For ten minutes he remained absolutely motionless. Then, straightening up like one in a trance, he began in a low and hollow voice:—

This is a revelation of events of a universal character which must shortly come to pass. Their spiritual outlines are now before my eyes. I see floating upon the surface of the sea of human fate the huge silhouette of a naked (2) woman. She is—with her beauty, her poise, her smile, her jewels—a super-Venus. Nations rush madly after her, each of them eager to attract her especially. But she, like an eternal courtesan, flirts with all. In her hair-ornament of diamonds and rubies is engraved her name: “Commercialism.” As alluring and bewitching as she seems, much destruction and agony follow (3) in her wake. Her breath, reeking of sordid transactions, her voice of metallic character like gold, and her look of greed are so much poison to the nations who fall victims to her charms.

And behold, she has three gigantic arms with three torches of universal corruption in her hand. The first torch represents the flame of War, that the beautiful courtesan carries from city to city and country to country. Patriotism answers with flashes of honest flame, but the end is the roar of guns and musketry.

The second torch bears the flame of Religiosity (4) and hypocrisy. It lights the lamps only in temples and on the altars of sacred institutions. It carries the seed of falsity and fanaticism. It kindles the minds that are still in cradles and follows them to their graves.

The third torch is that of the Law, that dangerous foundation of all unauthentic traditions, which first does its fatal work in the family, then sweeps thru the larger worlds of literature, art and statesmanship.

The great conflagration will start about 1912, set by the torch of the first arm in the countries of Southeastern Europe. It will develop into a destructive calamity in 1913. In that year I see all Europe in flames and bleed-

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(2) The text has *nude*, but this is the wrong word.

(3) *The North American* reads: “follows”.

(4) The text has: *Bigotry*. I use a better word.

ing. I hear the lamentations from huge battlefields. But about the year 1915 a strange figure from the North—a new Napoleon—enters the stage of the bloody drama. He is a man of little militaristic training, a writer or a journalist, but in his grip most of Europe will remain till 1925. The end of the great calamity will mark a new political era for the Old World. There will be left no empires and kingdoms, but the world will form a federation of the United States of Nations. There will remain only four great giants—the Anglo-Saxons, the Latins, the Slavs and the Mongolians.

After the year 1925 I see a change in religious sentiments. The second torch of the courtesan has brought about the fall of the Church. The ethical idea has almost vanished. Humanity is without the moral feeling. But then, a great reformer arises. He will clear the world of the relics of monotheism and lay the cornerstone of the temple of pantheism. God, Soul, Spirit and Immortality will be molten in a new furnace, and I see the peaceful beginning of an ethical era. The man determined to this mission is a Mongolian-Slav. He is already walking the earth—a man of active affairs. He himself does not now realize the mission assigned to him by a superior power.

And behold the flame of the third torch, which has already begun to destroy our family relations, our standards of art and morals. The relation between woman and man is accepted as a prosaic partnership of the sexes. Art has become realistic degeneracy. Political and religious disturbances have shaken the Spiritual foundations of all nations. Only small spots here and there have remained untouched by those three destructive flames. The anti-national wars in Europe, the class war of America and the race wars in Asia have strangled progress for half a century. But then, in the middle of this century, I see a hero of literature and art rising from the ranks of the Latins and purging (5) the world of the tedious stuff

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(5) A Socialist reprint (*The Melting Pot*, Saint Louis, October, 1914) reads: "Persians." This is a good example of how sacred literature becomes corrupt.

of the obvious. It is the light of symbolism that shall out-shine the light of the torch of commercialism. In place of the polygamy and monogamy of today, there will come a poetogamy—relations of the sexes based fundamentally upon poetic conceptions of life.

And I see the nations growing wiser; and realizing that the alluring woman of their destinies is after all nothing but an illusion. There will be a time when the world will have no use for armies, hypocritical religions and degenerate art. Life is evolution, and evolution is development from the simple to the more complicated forms of the mind and the body. I see the passing show of the world-drama in its present form, how it fades like the glow of evening upon the mountains. One motion of the hand of Commercialism and a new history begins.

The late author-reformer finisht, opened his eyes and lookt at me slightly confused.

"Had I gone to sleep?" he askt me. "I beg your pardon!"

When I read his vision-talk to him, he listened gravely and nodded, saying that it was correct. Upon my request, he signed the document and handed it to me with a blessing. I left him the same day, and immediately upon my arrivall informed the Czar of my readiness to see him.

I was received at the Court in an informal way and led into the Czar's private study. I handed him the paper. He opened it nervously and read with pronounced agitation.

"Well, it's very interesting. I will make a copy for myself, and then forward other copies, with a translation, to the Kaiser of Germany and thru him to the King of England. The original shall be kept in my private archives. I shall ask the Kaiser and the King not to make any comments on the matter, as I do not like to figure as an intermediary between them and the old man whose seditious writings I do not like, generally."

It is because I have heard that one of the royal principals

is going to include the secret message in his private memoirs, that I take this opportunity of publishing the whole truth about it and how I received the unusual document. The Czar has told me repeatedly that the Kaiser of Germany thinks it is one of the most impressive literary prophecies of this age.

[END OF NASTASIA TOLSTOY'S ACCOUNT.]

The publication of this in America was independent of Tolstoy's regular publishers, and called forth the following from *The Daily News and Leader*, London and Manchester, November 4, 1914:

TOLSTOY AND THE WAR.

(TO THE EDITOR.)

Sir,—A short time ago there appeared in some Swedish papers an article attributed to Leo Tolstoy which was reprinted in English, American, Russian and other papers. The article was entitled "A World-Wide Prophecy," and in some cases was published in the form of a "Letter to his daughter."

Having been Leo Tolstoy's literary representative during his lifetime, and being entrusted by him to edit and publish all his posthumous writings, I feel it my duty to state that Tolstoy never wrote anything of the kind, and that the attribution of this article to him is an absolute invention.

I would beg those papers who have mentioned the spurious article to reprint this statement.

(Signed)

VLADIMIR TCHERTKOFF.

Jassenki, Toula, Russia, Oct. 10.

[The article (which did not appear in "The Daily News") purported to contain a prediction of the present war, alleged to have been delivered by Count Tolstoy while in a state of semi-consciousness or trance. Tolstoy was further represented as having foretold the coming of a strange figure from the north—a new Napoleon in whose grip Europe would remain for ten years—from 1915 to 1925. —Ed., "D. N."]

As Tolstoy neither wrote nor printed the vision, but dictated it confidentially for the benefit of three kings, there was no reason for Mr. Chertkoff (in English spelling) to know anything about it.

## LA PUCELLE OR, THE FRENCH VISIONS OF 1913.

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*In the months of June, July and August, 1913, from fifty to a hundred people in the South of France had visions of Joan of Arc in armor. On August, 26, Cécile Lamillot, a miller's daughter at Alzonne, Department of Aude, saw flaming letters in the sky and copied them. They proved to be a Latin invocation to the Maid of Orleans. These facts were told in a letter to The Public Ledger of Philadelphia, dated from Paris, September 12, 1913.*

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In thy dreamy woods, Domremy,  
Once of yore there walkt and prayed,  
Seeing angels, hearing voices,  
Gallia's pure immortal Maid.

Glorified in shining armor,  
Under medieval towers,  
Leading Charles to Rheims Cathedral,  
Rides this wondrous Maid of ours.

Maid of ours, for France is all men's:  
E'en the bard of English birth  
Loves the girl who charged the English,  
Loves the heroine of earth.

Maiden, our eternal emblem  
Of the rights of folk to be,  
Emblem of the souls of peoples,  
Emblem of the planet free!



Just a year before the world-war,  
By the purr of rural streams,  
In the ecstasy of summer,  
France beheld thee in her dreams.

Country lads and girls beheld thee,  
Sword in hand with visor barred,  
Holding high thy mystic standard,  
Crowned with roses, victory-starred.

Was it thou their eyes were seeing,  
Or the nation's rising ire?  
Like the Michael of thy vision,  
'Twas the soul of France on fire.

By Alzonne, Cécile Lamillot  
Saw the flaming words on high,  
Copied down the warlike Latin,  
Wrote it blazing from the sky!

. 'Twas the prayer, the invocation  
Of the heart of France to thee,  
Which the miller's artless daughter  
In the world of soul could see.

All around us lie the legions  
Of the universe unseen,  
At these planetary crises  
Bursting from behind the screen.

From the vast and viewless ocean,  
Blown by some supernal breeze,  
Breaks the spray, and all the dreamy  
Smell the salt of unknown seas.

August, 1914.

A. J. E.

## THE ALLEGED VISION OF FRIAR JOHN.

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[Printed in *Le Figaro* in 1914, by Joséphin Péladan, and said by him to have been found among his father's papers in 1890.]

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This apocalypse, ascribed to Friar John of 1600, has been going the rounds of the press, but has not so far given credentials of genuineness. With other doubtful predictions it has been critically examined by Herbert Thurston, a Catholic divine, in *The Month* for October and November, 1914 (London: Longmans, Green & Co.). Before discovering his articles I had made some notes of my own, which follow.

There was a John of Paris who died early in the fourteenth century. He wrote a book called *De Christo et Antichristo*, which exists in manuscript in the library of St. Germain. (*Histoire Littéraire de la France*. . . Bénédictins. Tome 25: 1869. Paris, 1898.)

John's tract on Antichrist was appended to a similar work by Joachim of Calabria (Sæc. XII) and published at Venice in 1516. (See Brunet.) The visionary part of the tract is printed in a folio book in the Logonian Library: *Lectiones Memorabiles et Reconditæ* (Frankfort, 1671, Vol. I, p. 489). The compiler was John Wolf (1537-1600), not the famous Wolfius, and the first edition appeared between 1600 and 1608. Here is a sample:

*Ecce Leo Gallicus obviabit Aquilæ, et feriet caput ipsius; erit bellum immensum et mors valida . . . . gentes ab omni natione, etc.*

One vision under John's name is dated 1287. It was seen by a monk. It seems therefore that Antichrist visions by John of Calabria (twelfth century) and John of Paris (thirteenth and fourteenth) have long been current in the Roman Church, and that they have been printed several times: 1516, 1600, etc. Now, until we get better data than Joséphin Péladan has given us, there will be a suspicion that the present Apocalypse of Friar John has been adapted in recent times from former ones.

## APPENDIX.

THE VISION OF JOSEPH HOAG: 1803.<sup>(4)</sup>

[NOTE.—This is given here as an example of a vision which has been largely fulfilled. It is printed by the Society of Friends and can be bought at their book-store as a leaflet. I have discovered two types of text, and hope to give more account thereof in my forthcoming *University Lectures*.]

In the year 1803, probably in the Eighth or Ninth Month, I was one day alone in the field, and observed that the sun shone clear, but a mist eclipsed its brightness.

As I reflected upon the singularity of the event, my mind was struck into (5) a silence the most solemn I ever remember to have witnessed, for all my faculties were low, and unusually brought into deep silence. I said to myself: "What can all this mean? I do not recollect ever before to have been sensible of such feelings."

And I heard a voice from Heaven, saying: "This which thou seest is a sign of the present and coming times. I took the forefathers of this country from a land of oppression; I placed them here among the People of the Forest; I sustained them, and while they were humble I blessed them and fed them, and they became a numerous people. But they have now become proud and have forgotten Me, who nourished them and protected them in the wilderness, and are running into every abomination and evil practice of which the old countries are guilty, and

(4) Joseph Hoag was born in in the year 1762, and resided in early life in the State of New York, but removed to Vermont, where he died, 1846. His parents being members of the religious Society of Friends, he had a birthright membership. He and his wife (Huldah) were both ministers, and highly esteemed. They had a large family, and all of their children became ministers. The vision, although not printed and made public until within a few years, was well known to his family and a number of his friends many years before any part of it was fulfilled. (Note by the Society of Friends.)

(5) Or, *clothed with*.

have taken quietude from the land and suffered a dividing spirit to come among them: lift up thine eyes and behold." And I saw them dividing in great heat. The division began in the churches on points of doctrine: it commenced in the Presbyterian society, and went through the various religious denominations, and in its progress and close its effects were the same. Those who dissented went off with high heads and taunting language, and those who kept to their original sentiments appeared exercised and sorrowful. And when the dividing spirit entered the Society of Friends, it raged in as high degree as in any I had noticed or before discovered, and, as before, those who separated went off with lofty looks and taunting, censuring language; those who kept their ancient principles retired by themselves. It next appeared in the Lodges of the Free Masons (it broke out in appearance like a volcano), inasmuch as it set the country in an uproar for a time.

Then it entered politics throughout the United States, and did not stop until it produced a civil war. An abundance of blood was shed in the course of the combat; the Southern States lost their power, and slavery was annihilated from their borders. Then a monarchical power sprang up (took the government of the States), established a National religion, and made all societies tributary to support its expenses: I saw them take property from Friends to a large amount. I was amazed at beholding all this, and I heard a voice proclaiming: "This power shall not always stand; but with it I will chastise My church until they return to the faithfulness of their forefathers. Thou seest what is coming upon thy native country for their iniquities and the blood of Africa, the remembrance of which has come up before Me."

This vision is yet for many days. (I had no idea of writing it for many years, until it became such a burden that, for my own relief, I have written it).

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NOTE.—The parentheses are intended for square brackets, indicating a difference of text to be discust in the Lectures.

## FINAL NOTE ON THE WAR.

In *The Open Court* for December, 1914, pp. 743-744, Paul Carus quotes the first part of a letter from me. But he omits the second part, which is the most essential point of the argument. It here follows:—

Every scholar knows that only a fraction of the documentary facts about a war ever sees the light, and the most important from 50 to 100 years afterwards. Even the hundred and twenty-seven volumes of official documents, Federal and Confederate, about our Civil War begin too late. All the ferment that led up to the firing upon Fort Sumter has to be spelt out from thousands of other records, journalistic, military, political, biographical. And then how much is buried in secret conversations, never divulged. Consequently, my method to settle the ethics of a war is chronological. I try to determine upon which side a public man or an influential organ first uttered inflammatory language or first started a campaign of wordy attack which consolidated hostile sentiment. In the case of the Civil War I lay the blame upon Lloyd Garrison. We have here the files of his *Liberator*, and from the first number, January 1, 1831, he began to irritate the South. For instance, he would have a flaming motto sprawling across the page, to the effect that the Federal Constitution was a covenant with hell. Now, all my Quaker traditions, as well as my political leanings, cause me to take the Federal side of the conflict; but, as a philosophic student, I am forced to admit that the Free States were the first to consolidate hostile sentiment.

Upon the same principle, I shall regard Germany as the aggressor, in the utterance of Professor Treitschke, of 1884, until I can antedate it by a like piece of English jingoism.

Your sincere friend,

ALBERT J. EDMUNDS.







